

AT THE EARTH'S CORE

BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS, AUTHOR OF "TARZAN"

CHAPTER XI—Continued.

The door was close by. Would that I could reach it! But those heavy chains prevented any such possibility. I looked about for some means of escape from my prison.

Upon the floor between me and the Mahars lay a tiny surgical instrument which was not unlike a button hook, but was much smaller, and its point was sharpened. A few times in my boyhood days had I played with a button hook.

Could I reach that little bit of polished steel I might yet effect at least a temporary escape.

Crawling to the limit of my chain I felt as I could my fingers still feel an inch of the covered instrument. It was a button hook. I stretched every fiber of my body and I could not quite make it.

At last I turned about and extended one foot toward the object.

Your heart came to my throat! I could just touch the thing! But suppose that it were to drag it toward me I should not be able to hold it still further away and send it out of reach! Cold sweat broke out upon my face.

Slowly and cautiously I made the effort. My toes dropped upon the cold metal. Gradually I worked it toward me until I felt that it was within reach of my hand and a moment later it was in my grasp and the precious thing was in my hand.

At last I turned about and extended one foot toward the object.

Where I was or whether I was going I knew not. My only thought was to place as much distance as possible between me and that frightful chamber of torture.

Presently I reduced my speed to a snail's pace, and later realizing the danger of running into some new predicament I not only slowed down but moved more slowly and cautiously still.

After a time I came to a passage that seemed in some mysterious way familiar to me, and presently, chancing to glance toward a chamber which led from the corridor I saw that three Mahars and those I had met in my escape from Phutra. Providence had indeed been kind to me, for the reptiles still slept.

My one great danger now lay in reaching the upper levels in search of Perry and Ghak, but there was nothing else to be done, so I hastened upward.

When I came to the frequent portals of the building I found a large bundle of skins in a corner, and those I lifted to my head, carrying them in such a way that ends and corners fell down about my shoulders, completely hiding my face. This disguise I found Perry and Ghak together in the chamber where we had been wont to eat and sleep.

Both were glad to see me, it is needless to say, though of course they had known nothing of the fate that had befallen me to me after my trial by the judges.

It was decided that no time should now be lost before attempting to put our plan of escape to the test, as I could not hope to remain hidden from the Sargol's tones, nor could I forever carry that bale of skins about upon my head without arousing suspicion.

Never did it seem likely that it would carry me once more safely through the mazelike passages and chambers of the upper levels, and so I set out with Perry and Ghak—the stench of the ill-cured parchment choking me.

Together we repaired to the first tier of corridors beneath the main level of the building, and here Perry and Ghak halted to await me.

The buildings are cut out of the solid limestone formation. There is nothing at all remarkable about their rectangular, sometimes circular, and again oval in shape. The corridors which connect them are narrow and not always straight. The chambers are lighted by diffused sunlight reflected through tubes similar to those by which the avenues are lighted.

At lower levels the tiers of chambers, the passages, the corridors are entirely unlighted. Most of the Mahars can see quite well in semidarkness.

Down to the main floor we encountered many Mahars, Sargols and slaves; but no attention was paid us, as we had become a part of the domestic life of the building. There was but a single entrance leading from the place into the passage, and this was well guarded by a Mahar. This doorway alone were we bound to pass.

It is true that we were not supposed to enter the deeper corridors and apartments except on special occasions when we were considered as lower order without intelligence there was little reason to fear that we could accomplish any harm by so doing, and so we were not hindered as we entered the corridor which led below.

Wrapped in a skin I carried three swords and the two bows, with the arrows which Perry and Ghak had given me. As my slaves bore skin-wrapped burdens I had for my load attracted no comment.

When I left Ghak and Perry there were no other creatures in sight, and so I withdrew the balance of the weapons which Perry, started on alone toward the lower levels for his dangerous enterprise.

Having crossed to the apartment in which the three Mahars slept I entered silently the passage, forgetting that the creatures were without the sense of hearing.

With a quick thrust through the heart I passed the first, but my second thrust was so fortunate, so that before I could kill the third, who had hurried itself against my victims with a quickness, I was facing me with wide staring eyes.

Not fighting is not the occupation which the Mahars love, and when the Mahars saw that I already had dispatched two of its companions they fled with their blood, and my sword which I had thrust into the third, who had hurried itself against my victims with a quickness, I was facing me with wide staring eyes.

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The one that had been there when we entered had been occupied with a number of metal vessels, into which had been put powders and liquids, as I judged from the array of flasks standing about upon the bench where it had been working.

In an instant I realized what I had stumbled upon. It was the very room for the finding of which Perry had given me minute directions. It was the buried chamber in which was hidden the Great Secret of this horrible race of Mahars.

And on the bench beside the flasks lay the skin-bound book which held the only copy of the thing I was to have sought, after dispatching the three Mahars in their sleep.

There was no exit from the room other than the doorway in which I now stood facing the two frightful reptiles.

Concealed, I knew that they would fight like demons, and they were well equipped to fight if they were forced to fight.

Together they launched themselves upon me and though I ran one of them through the body with the other fastened to its gleaming fangs about my sword arm above the elbow, and then with her sharp talons commenced to rake me about the body, evidently intent upon dismembering me.

I saw that it was useless to hope that I might release my arm from that powerful, viselike grip which seemed to be severing my arm from my body. The pain I suffered was intense, but it only served to spur me to greater efforts to overcome my antagonist.

Back and forth across the floor we struggled—the Mahars dealing me terrific cutting blows with her fangs, while I attempted to protect my body with my left hand, at the same time watching for an opportunity to transfer my blade from my now useless sword hand to its rapidly weakening mate.

At last I was successful, and with what seemed to me my last ounce of strength I ran the blade through the throat of my foe.

Soundless, as it had fought, it died, and though weak from pain and loss of blood, it was with an emotion of triumph that I stepped across its convulsively stiffening corpse to snatch up to the most potent secret of this horrible world.

A single glance told me that it tallied to a piece with Perry's description as he had read it from the ancient records of the Mahars.

And as I grasped it did I think of what it meant to the human race my mind thought that the countless generations of my own kind yet unborn would have reason to worship me for the thing that I had accomplished for them? Did I? I did not.

I thought of a beautiful oval face, gazing out of limpid eyes, through a waving mass of jet-black hair. I thought of red lips, God-made for kissing.

For an instant I stood there thinking of Lillian Bird, and then, with a sigh, I tucked the book in the thing that supported my left elbow, and turned to leave the apartment.

At the bottom of the corridor which leads to the lower chambers I was whistled in accordance with the prearranged signal which was to announce to Perry and Ghak that I had been successful. A moment later they stood beside me and to my surprise I saw that Hojja the Sly One accompanied them.

"He joined us," exclaimed Perry, "and would not be denied. The fellow is a fox. He accents escape, and rather than be thwarted of one chance now I told him that I would bring him to you and let you decide whether he might accompany us."

I had no love for Hojja, and no confidence in him. I was sure that if he thought it would profit him he would betray us; but I saw no way out of it now, and the fact that I had killed four Mahars instead of only three I had expected, made it possible to include the fellow in our scheme of escape.

"Very well," I said; "you may come with us, Hojja; but at the first intimation of treachery I shall run my sword through you. Do you understand?"

He said that he did.

CONTINUED TOMORROW.

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THE CHEERFUL CHERUB

I read those rabid magazines That say God made mistakes, but my— How can they talk that way about Whoever made the trees and sky!

Marion Harland's Corner

All communication addressed to Marion Harland should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope, and a clipping of the article in which you are interested. Persons wishing to read the interesting work of the H. H. C. should write Marion Harland, in care of this paper, for address of those they would like to help, and having received them, communicate direct with these parties.

Club Wants Reading Matter

WE ARE 12 girls just starting a literary and social club and are anxious to obtain books, magazines and popular and classical music that some one is tired of. We will pay postage if it does not come too high, or we will call for it and reciprocate should the opportunity present itself. We are all readers of your Corner and send our blessings to it.

Hard to Obtain Music

In a recent issue of the Corner I saw the enclosed offer. I should be pleased to pay charges on this music. Please find out what it will cost to pay postage on same and I will gladly remit. I play for a church here and it is hard to obtain music.

Formula for Floor Polish

Will some one please publish a good recipe for floor oil? We buy a 25-cent bottle and it lasts only a little while. It is much too expensive for people of moderate means to use.

Things to Know

1. Solve the following numerical puzzle sent in by Francis J. Brandt, Buist avenue.

I am composed of 16 letters.
My 1, 8, 7 is a metal.
My 2, 6 is a masculine personal pronoun.
My 3, 5, 15 is a woman's name.
My 4, 10, 14 belongs to a chicken.
My 5, 12, 11 is a covering for the face.
My 6, 13, 19, 12 is a sharp edge.
My 9, 8, 11, 15 is a river in Africa.
My 16, 8, 5, 14 is a circle.
My whole should be in every good home.

Billy's Reward

By ELEANOR KNOWN, Wynwood, Pa.
Billy was looking up and down the city street, he held a slip of paper in his hand. Why was he so careful of this little piece of paper? It was very valuable, it was a bank note. Billy had found it, and was looking for the owner. He had heard of people advertising things they had found. So he did this and soon the owner wrote to him. He rewarded him greatly. Now if Billy had chosen he might have kept the money but as he didn't he got a much greater reward.

A Kind Child

By BERTHA BECOVITCH, S. 7th St.
One day a lady was riding in a car with a baby on her lap. She called the baby May. Little May had a beautiful rose in her hand. Across the aisle sat an old woman, with worn but clean clothes. She looked sad and heartbroken. The child looked over the aisle and saw her. She crept off her mother's lap, walked over to the old lady and put the rose into her hand. When the old lady looked up tears could be seen in her eyes. She called the child over and patted her head, saying, "You dear child." Everybody in the car thought Little May a very kind child.

WATCH FOR OUR "BABY WEEK" NUMBER, SATURDAY NIGHT

OUTDOOR SPORTS

BY JOHN BOGLE

HOUSEHOLD PHYSICS

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT

Why Does an Electric Light Light?

By VIRGINIA E. KIFT

TO THE average person it is the greatest mystery as to what is an electric light. It is explained easily by the simplest law of electricity that heat is produced when a current of electricity flows through a wire. If the wire has certain properties (high "resistance") and the pressure of the electric fluid is sufficiently high, the wire glows or becomes incandescent.

Energy can readily be changed from one form to another, and in the incandescent lamps the energy of electricity is changed into heat and light. In an electric lamp the wire filament is heated to a high temperature in order to raise it to a white heat. This white heat gives off an intense light which we know as electric light.

In the ordinary lamp the filament, or fine wire, is made of carbon or tungsten. This is inclosed in a glass bulb from which all air has been extracted. If the bulb were filled with air the filament would last only a few minutes, while in a vacuum it will last about 1000 hours. Some of the newest lamps are filled with a gas nitrogen which permits the filament to be heated to a very high temperature, thereby producing an even more intense light, without burning out the lamp.

In the diagram, when the socket (a) is screwed into the chandelier and the connection is made, the electric current flows through the two wires in the glass stem (b) to the filament (c), supported by the glass stem (c). A vacuum is inclosed by the glass bulb surrounds the filament.

Electric light is in such common use today that we cease to wonder at its marvelous nature, but it is interesting to stop for a moment and consider why an electric light "lights."

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FARMER SMITH'S RAINBOW CLUB

MOTHERS OF BOYS

Dear Children—One of the most interesting persons in the world is the mother of a boy.

Of course, other mothers are more or less interesting, but there is always something wonderful and mysterious about a mother who has a boy.

We say this because lately some of the boys' mothers have been kind enough to come and look into our clubroom and say very nice things about us.

One of these dear mothers has been kind enough to give your editor an idea and she thinks it would be a good idea for the boys who wear collars to mix with the boys who do not wear collars. In other words, those boys who are neatly dressed to mingle with some of our boys who are not so nicely dressed.

Your editor does not believe in calling any child poor. Unfortunately, there is no way to discriminate between the boy who has a penny and another who has an automobile unless we describe one as wealthy and the other poor.

One of my boys has said that a poor boy is one whose father is out of work.

In after life you will mingle with all sorts and conditions of people. If your father has a large factory and leaves it to you, the great problem of employing some one to work for you will come up and no man can manage other men unless he knows what the other men are doing.

Neither can a little girl, when she grows up, manage a cook unless she is a good cook herself.

Of course, we know that each mother thinks that her boy is the dearest, sweetest, cutest little creature that ever lived, and she wants to shield him from any harm, but most of us have, sooner or later, to strike the rough places in life and have our noses punched occasionally, and it seems to your editor that it would be a good idea to start early on this experience of bucking up against the world and not wait until we are grown up.

What do you think about it?
FARMER SMITH,
Children's Editor, EVENING LEDGER.

Glenside; the other is Earl Halphen Fustler, who was born in Ashbourne, Pa., just 10 months ago. Both are welcomed to their 27,000 big brother and sister Rainbows can make them it.

Our Postoffice Box

A dear little songster came into our office last week from Darby! Her name is Lillian Bird, and tonight, what do you think? She flew straight into the picture gallery!

Rain Southern, Atco, N. J., has been sick and we are very happy to hear that she is well and about again. Joseph Meade, Falls of Schuylkill, wants to know more about the Rainbow Club. Who would like to tell him? Speak up, branch clubs! Oh, there is another branch club promised. George Thomas, South 55th street, is the young man who is responsible for the promise, and we know he is going to keep it.

What do you think? Frederick Fueller, Glenside, has sent us in two brand new Rainbows, and they are his very own nephews. Just two wee packages of sunshine, but as willing to be Rainbows as simple and cozy as indicate. One is a green-tinted, a 3 months' old citizen of

HOUSEHOLD SUGGESTIONS

A Tuft Brush

Handy for cleaning tufted upholstery and getting dirt out of the out-of-the-way corners. Specially adapted for limousine cushions.

PRICE 50c to \$1.50.

REMEMBER! We have a brush for every purpose. ALWAYS BUY GOOD THINGS. IT'S CHEAPER IN THE END.

J. Franklin Miller

INCORPORATED
1626 Chestnut St.
The House Furnishing Store

STAIRS

Interior Alterations

Get Estimates
Frank C. Sneider & Co.
9th and Tioga Streets

Brain Bread

"Will you kindly send me a recipe for baking brain biscuits as baked with bran flour and whole wheat flour."
MRS. R. J.

Fruit Cake

"I have been reading your most helpful Corner, and I'm sending my favorite recipe, and ask a favor at the same time. Who will give us what we long for?"

Put into a saucepan two small cups of seedless raisins, one cup of water, quarter cup of brown sugar, pinch of salt, half a grated nutmeg, one tablespoonful of cinnamon, half teaspoonful of cloves. Let it come to a boil, remove from the stove, and let rest cold. (It should boil three minutes.) Beat in two cups of sifted flour and one and one-half cups of baking powder, one cup of water, quarter cup of oil, and mix and bake for 45 minutes. A cheap and good cake. So much for the favorite recipe. Now for the favor. I present the plan timidly: Would you be so kind as to send me the address of Mrs. A. L. C., who has

Wants Copies of Poems

"I note in your interesting Corner a letter signed 'Marie D. E.' offering to send copies of 'The Piece Upon the Floor.' I should like to get a copy, if possible. Also, a copy of the poem, 'Moneyless Man.' I think it is called, by Stanton."
"GEORGE C."

ASK FOR and GET HORLICK'S THE ORIGINAL MALTED MILK

Cheap substitutes cost YOU same price

Walk Over

New Spring Boots are coming in daily in a constant succession of smartly designed effects. And for the first time in weeks we have enough Pearl-Gray Kid to meet demand.

Nine Dollars

The Harper Shoe Co.

1022 Chestnut St. 1228 Market St.
Credit & Cash Accounts Cash Accounts Only

The Children's Paradise

A LITTLE JOURNEY TO HOSKINS

By FARMER SMITH

MY DEAR CHILDREN:

The other night as I went up Chestnut Street about half-past—well never mind what time it was—I peeked into the window of HOSKINS, and what do you think? One of the little paper figures bowed to me—just that-a-way, see? You can give your head a jerk to see how the paper figure did it.

As I looked in the windows and saw the pencils, and pads of paper, and books and the dainty little things for children's desks, an idea came to me. I do not know whether it came down with a snowflake or merely came as a message with the wind, but the idea was this: That we should have some Rainbow Club Stationery and Cards and little paper things and pencils and pens and ink bottles, and oh! just lots of things for our Club.

That night I lay awake just 69 minutes thinking about it, and I just could not go to sleep.

I felt the next day that I should go right down to HOSKINS and have them make some Rainbow Stationery. The moment I thought of this it seemed to me that my idea was all wrong, because we have never done anything without asking our dear Members, but I will tell you what I did do. I went right through the beautiful store all filled with things that children love so dearly, and lots and lots of things for grownups, and I marched real bravely right up to the Hoskinsman's Office, and I said to him: "What a beautiful store you have. This must be the Children's Paradise; there are such lots and lots of things that children love."

He said: "What a beautiful idea. I never thought of that. I always wanted a name for our store, and we love to have the children come in. And he said: 'What can I do for you?'"

I replied that I was looking in the window of his store and saw the little paper figures and the stationery and pencils and pens and other things, but I didn't see any Rainbow Stationery, and I thought we ought to have some Rainbow Stationery.

"A capital idea!" exclaimed the Hoskinsman. "Mercy me!" exclaimed the Hoskinsman again, "are you the man who talks to 27,000 little children at once?"

I replied that I was, and I think my face got as red as a beet, because I looked at one of the red calendars on the wall, and it looked like the way my face felt.

"Why, of course," said the Hoskinsman; "we will be only too glad to make Rainbow Stationery for you. We will get our artist to have a design made for you."

"No, you won't," said I, real brave like. "All the children have to be consulted. We never do anything without our Members' consent, and if you wish to make them some stationery, we will have to ask them to submit designs for Rainbow Paper and Envelopes and also for little Cards."

"Ahem, ahem!" went the Hoskinsman. "I never heard of such a thing. You mean to tell me that you have to ask all those little angels before you do anything?"

"Do not misunderstand me," I said. "The Club belongs to the children, not to me."

"Oh!" he said, "very well; what is it you wish me to do?"

"I think it would be a good idea for you to put the announcement right on the page with our Club news and tell the children that you are going to make our stationery for us, and they should write letters to you telling you what they think our Rainbow Stationery should be and also draw you samples of what they would like."

"Will I get many letters?" asked the Hoskinsman in surprise.

"You just wait and see," said I proudly, for only that morning I had received 60 letters, and "besides," I added, "it's lots of fun to open children's letters."

"All right, all right," said the Hoskinsman; "I'll leave it to you."

And so, dear children, I promise you honest injun—cross my heart—that as soon as your letters have reached the Hoskinsman at HOSKINS, 904-906 Chestnut Street, in the good City of Philadelphia, we will go to work selecting the suggestion or design for our Rainbow Stationery, so that when you write to your Editor or Envelopes and also for little Cards."

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"Ahem, ahem!" went the Hoskinsman. "I never heard of such a thing. You mean to tell me that you have to ask all those little angels before you do anything?"

"Do not misunderstand me," I said. "The Club belongs to the children, not to me."

"Oh!" he said, "very well; what is it you wish me to do?"

"I think it would be a good idea for you to put the announcement right on the page with our Club news and tell the children that you are going to make our stationery for us, and they should write letters to you telling you what they think our Rainbow Stationery should be and also draw you samples of what they would like."

"Will I get many letters?" asked the Hoskinsman in surprise.

"You just wait and see," said I proudly, for only that morning I had received 60 letters, and "besides," I added, "it's lots of fun to open children's letters."

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